A True relation of Go

vvonderfull mercies, in preseruing one aliue, which hanged fiue dayes, who was falsely accused.

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BRITAN
NICVM

A True Relation, of a most wonderfull and strange accident which hapned on a young man borne at *Dort* a towne in *Holland*: who trauailing betweene *Franckfort* and *Antwerp*, was falsely accused for a robbery, and executed for the same at a Towne called *Bon*, where he hanged fiue dayes, & was by God mightily preserued, to the great astonishment of all the beholders.

IN the towne of *Dort* vpon the long reede Banke (neere the signe of the three Pidgions) there dwelled a man whose name was Iohn Peterson, borne in the Citie of Antwerp: who maried with a young woman, borne at Dort aforesaid: This Iohn Peterson with his wife liued many yeares together, he being a waterman, who vsed to ferry passengers from Dort to Rotterdam, and his wife vsed the trade of dressing of flax: these two hauing had diuers children, it pleased God that all dyed sauing two Sonnes,

whose names were, the one Nicholas Iohnson who now dwelleth at the Brill, the other Iohn Iohnson (for often they take their surnames of their Fathers Christen name) of which Iohn Iohnson we are hereafter to intreat: whose Parents dyed in the yeare of our Lord 1600, being very poore.

This John Peterson being deceased, hauing a brother yet dwelling in the Citie of Antwerp who vnderstanding of the death of his brother sent to Dort for Iohn Iohnson the youngest son of his brother deceased (being a pretty youth) who thought it fitter to keepe one of his owne kinsmen, then the sonne of any stranger: when this youth came to Antwerp, his Vncle gaue him very kinde welcome, being ioyfull to see him, for he had neuer seene him before that time. Now it pleased his Vncle to imploy this Iohn Iohnson about his affaires, who vsed such diligence in all things he went about, that he procured such loue of his Vncle, as if he had bene his deare childe, he could neuer haue respected him with more regard: and the rather, for that he gaue his minde to all vertuous & godly exercises: Insomuch, that whatsoeuer the young man did, it was most pleasing to his Vncle, as also to most who knew him: He was many times assailed by Iesuits (and others of that religion) to conuert him from the true religion which he then professed, but

but he continuing constant, by no meanes would yeild vnto them: which being bruited in the Citie, he was of all the godly generally well respected.

To come to the matter: his Vncle being a man of great trading in marchandize, had occasion (with diuers other marchants) to trauaile to Francfort Mart (for he vied much to go thither) and thought it fit to take his kinsman Iohn Iohnson along with him, to acquaint him in those partes, that he might the better afterwards haue knowledge in his business: & his Vncle delighted greatly in his company, by reason he was giuen to much honest mirth, for which all that knew him did exceedingly affect him, and called him the Hollander, demaunding often of him, if all Hollanders were so pleasant as himselfe was passing on the way. After their long iourney, they came to Francfort, euery man taking his leaue of other, intending to goe about their affaires: And after some few dates of their continuance in Francfort, there came a Letter to this Iohn Iohnsons Vncle (from Antwerp) to certifye him of business of great import, which was speedily to be dispatched at home: wherupon his Vncle hauing as yet effected little business, did thinke it most conuenient to send the said Iohn Iohnson to Antwerp (knowing his sufficient care in any of his employments) whilst he himselfe stayed till his

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ends of the Mart. Now hauing commaunde-
ment of his Vncle to depart for Antwerp, hee
tooke his leaue, and set forward on his iour-
ney without any feare, for he had hitherto loose,
and taking his iourneys to the same Townes
and Innes, where before he with his Vncle &
other Marchants had lyen: At length he came
to Bon, to the same Inne where he before had
lodged, which was neere the market-place,
at the signe of the Swan, without suspect of
any danger: where also lodged diuers Mar-
chants, with whome this Iohn Iohnson that
night supped, hauing had very good fare: and
passing the time away with pleasant discour-
sings, vntill it grew towards bed-time: and
being shewed their chambers, the young man
desired the Host that he would call him vp ve-
ry early, who promising so to doe, departed.
This Host hauing espied one of the other Mar-
chants to haue a Budget, wherein was good
store of money, (who lodged in the same Cham-
ber where the young man lodged) thought
with himselfe how he might get this Bud-
get, and to liue vnsuspected: at last he deuised
with himselfe, that hauing the money, he would
vnzip so cunningly that none should be suspected
but the young man: The Host in the night
came stealing into their chamber, there taking
away the Marchants Budget with money,
and the young mans Mallet, wherein was

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these foule linnen, and shooes, and such like. when this Host had opened the Marchants Budget, and taken out the money, he found also in the same a Seale Ring & an Obligation, which Obligation and Seale-ring, the Host tooke out, and with a siluer Tonne of his owne, whereon the Hosts marke was grauen, and which his guests did drinke in the night before at Supper, hee put these three in the young mans wallet, and tyed it by as it was afore, and entring the Chamber againe laid the wallet in the place from whence he tooke it.

In the morning the Host (according to his promise) calles vp the young man, who presently rising, made him ready, paid his reckoning, tooke his leaue, and went his way on his iourney, hauing the Marchants Ring and Obligation, with the Hosts siluer Tonne, tyed vp in his wallet, vnknowne vnto him: so trauayling on without any mistrust, it fortuned that the Marchant arysing, and missing his Budget with his money, presently called out, saying he was robd: and being exceedingly perplexed, and in a great fury, the Host (as if hee had not knowne any thing) came speedily vnto him, demaunding the occasion of his outrage. To whome hee replyed that his Budget with his money was stolne away from him. The Host answering, that if hee had lost any

thing, there was none could haue it but the youth who lodged that night in the Chamber, and was so sodainely gone away in the morning. Therefore let vs with all spede take horse, & we shall surely ouertake him: Whereupon, with all haste that might be, the Marchant, with the treacherous host, tooke their hasles, and in very short time they ouertooke this Iohn Iohnson. The Host speaking very furiously vnto him, charged him of Felony, saying, thou hast robbed this Marchant (who lay this night in the same Chamber where thy selfe didst lodge) of all his money: The modest youth man, at the first being greatly affrighted stood amazed, knowing himselfe without fault, answered: Truly I am as cleer from such offence, as any person in the world: Yet notwithstanding, the Host was marueylous importunate to haue the young mans wallet searcht, which being opened, there appeared to their sight, the Hosts siluer Towne, with the Marchants Obligation and seale Ring: which when the Marchant espied, he thought verily that none had his money but he: The young man when he saw these things pulled out of his wallet, almost dred with greefe, excusing himselfe, that he neuer knew how they came into his Wallet: but the Host vowed that hee should be hanged if it should cost him an hundreth pound: So causing the youth to returne

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backe againe to Bon, they brought him before the Magistrates, who after his examination, he still denying the fact, was committed to prison, put vpon the Racke, and grieuously tormented: the youth feeling this miserable paine, cryed to God for ayde, and voluntarily confest that he had done the deed, although indeed he did it not: Afterward, being brought to the publike place of tryall, he was there adiudged to be hanged for that offence: But when he perceaued that he must needs die the shamefull death, he lamenting all his sinfull life past, which he had committed against the Maiestie of Almighty God, he hoped to be saued in the faith he had in Iesus Christ: So being led to the place of execution, in the presence of all the beholders, said: I am here come to suffer death in this place, and now in presence of you all, I take God to be my witnes (& therewith wept most bitterly) that I neuer knew of the stealing either of the Marchants money, neither of the Hoasts siluer Tonne, nor can any way deuise by what meanes they should come into my Wallet: and in respect I am cleere of this fact for which I am heere condemned to die, I doe beseech Almightie God that it will please him through his great power, to shew some miracle on me, whereby the truth may be knowne, and that all men may perceaue that I suffer innocently: the people grieued much to heare

him invocate the name of God in that extremi-
ty, prayed also with him and lamented his
timeles death, if he were as he saide without
fault: so having ended his prayers, he was tur-
ned off the Ladder and hanged: but the Lord
God hauing heard his prayers, and knowing
his innocencie, did most miraculously preserue
him, as heereafter you shall heare.

His Uncle having ended all his busines at
Francfort, in the company of diuers other Mar-
chants, tooke their iournies homewards to-
wards Antwerp, and according to their won-
ted manner they tooke their Inne (where be-
fore they were accustomed) at the Signe of the
Swan in the Towne of Bon.

In the morning following, when these
Marchants intended to depart from thence,
The hoast being amongst them, tolde them
that there was a young man, which was in
their company the last time that they lod-
ged there, who had robbed him of a siluer
Tonne which they vsed to drinke in, and a
Marchant (which lodged in the house) of a
great summe of money: for which offence, the
young man was apprehended, and afterwards
confest the fact, and then adiudged to be han-
ged, which is now fiue daies since he was exe-
cuted, and still hangeth on the gallowes with-
out the gates.

The young mans Uncle being stroken into
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wonderful admiration at this speech, demaun-
ded of the Host what manner a fellow he was
which committed the robbery: he being well
assured that his kinsman would not commit a-
ny such abuse: but by the Hoasts description, in
all things it was his kinsman: Whereupon,
because he would be certaine whether it was
he or no, he earnestly requested the other Mar-
chants which were with him, to take so much
paines, as to goe with him to see him, for hee
could hardly yet believe it to be him.

And comming to the place where the young
man hanged, so soone as he came neere him, he
espied him to be his kinsman, at the sight where-
of he sodainely fell downe in a swound: but the
Marchants helping him vp, comforted him
with all their helpes. Presently, the young-
man (there hanging) spake to his Uncle in this
manner following.

O my loving and most deere Uncle, although
I heere hang most shamefully, yet am I not
dead, for it hath pleased Almighty God to pre-
serue me, by placing a stoole vnder my feete,
which to you is not perceaued, vpon the which
I stand, And the Angell of the Lord, from hea-
uen, hath fed me heere fiue dayes: I beseech
you take the paines, to returne to the Towne
of Bon, and certifie the Maisterer there, in
what manner you haue found me, and request
them to come with you, and I will let them vn-

derstand that I am heere hanged without any offence: The Marchants hearing the young man speaking in this manner, were much astonyed, and straight-way departed from thence: and when they came before the Magistrates, they before them vpon their Oathes deliuered what the young man had related vnto them: whereat the Magistrates marualled, and presently with the Marchants they went to the place where the young man did hang, and perceiuing all to be true which the Marchants had reported vnto them, they caused him to be presently taken downe, who was then in perfect health, although he had hanged fiue dayes.

But God, the defender of all that put their whole trust in his mercies, seeing this young mans innocencie (to make his wonderous workes to seeme the more admirable, and to bring the truth to light) preserued him all this time, without any perill or danger vnto him.

Then the Magistrates (in the company of those Marchants) hauing seene this miraculous worke of the Lord, brought this Iohn Iohnson vnto the Towne, where they examined this youth throughly of all doubts, who certified them of all the manner of his coming to such an Inne, then bo[th] he requested his Host to call him vp in the morning, then departing, and after two dayes he [illegible] with the Marchant came riding after him, and ouertooke him: which when they perceiued,

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presently they sent for the Host, to examine him vpon the particulers, touching this young man: but when the Host beheld the young man still to be aliue, the Host presently confessed the deed, & how hee himselfe had wrongfully accused that youth of those sellonies which he himselfe had cõmitted. When these Magistrats heard all the truth of this busines, they praised God for preseruing this young man, and brigning to light the wretched offender: And so sentence was pronounced vpon this Host, that he should be conueyed to prison, and the next day to be bound to a Stake neere the place where the young-man was hanged, and there to be buent: which was accordingly performed. And likewise it was ordered by those Iudges that the young man should possesse to his own vse, the somme of three thousand Guilders, of the Hosts money, in recompence of the iniurie was done vnto him.

After this execution was finished, the young man, with his Vncle, & the other Marchants, taking their leaues of the Magistrates, departed towards Antwerp. Where now this Iohn Iohnson, with his Vncle Gerard Anthonyson, doe at this day remaine, neere a place called the Meere, or water. Whosoeuer doe repaire to that place, may be an eye-witnes, & see the party who was executed as before is declared.

The Magistrates of *Bon*, caused this to be Printed, to set forth the mighty power and glorie of God, as themselues were witnesses thereof.

FINIS.